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The Columbus — Letters.

Cristoforo Colombo
" "

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SOUVENIR
OF THE
MONASTERY OF LA HABIDA,
WORLD'S FAIR GROUND
CHICAGO.

E114
C27

[*Letter of Columbus to Nicolo Oderigo, March 21, 1502.*]

SIR :

The solitude in which you have left us cannot be described. I gave Micer Francis de Ribarol the book containing my deeds (or grants, or concessions), and, also, copies of the letters and messages sent to me; and, I pray you, as a great favor to me, to write to Don Diego and inform him of the place in which you keep those documents, and the use you make of them. A duplicate of ail of them will be made, and sent to you in the same way and through the same channel of Francisco. You will find there a new concession. Their Highnesses promise therein, as you will see, to give me all that belongs to me, and put Don Diego in possession thereof. I have written to Micer Juan Luys, and to Madam Madona Catalina the letter I enclose. I shall start out, in the name of the Most Holy Trinity, with a good equipment, at the first moment of good weather. If Jerome de Santi Esteban comes, he must wait for me, and not to commit himself to anything; because they will try to get out of him all that they can, and afterwards they will leave him in the cold. Let him come here, and the King and Queen will entertain him until I come.

May our Lord keep you in His holy guard.

Done on the 21st of March, at SEVILLE, 1502.

I am, for what you may order,

Your servant,

X. M. Y.

XPO FERENS.

3. D. B. 16 D. 112

Porra / la solidad i q nos habros
 de fado no se puede dezir / el libro de miso d'alta
 tabi di amax fi de tharol por q os lo i bui co ota
 de fado de raxos misaprel / del tharol y el lugar
 q por my b e illa q os pudo pad m'ca / q lo r'bray o
 no d'igo / ota tal q acabava / y q os i brava
 por la misma g'isa / y el miso me q' fi / i ota
 fall'z'g'e r'f'erta m'ba // .S. ac me p'rom'cto
 de me dar todo lo q me p'tene y q lo p'one i p'ofesio
 de todo m' d'g' como b'g'z'g'e / al q m'ar f'ra
 l'g'z' y q la q m'adona catolica s'v'no / la r'v'ca
 va co r'ra / y q hoy de p'rtida i m'bra de la
 Santa Trinidad co el p'rimar b'ra t'po // co m'go atobio
 / q p'v'rimo de p'nte i t'ba v'no d' b'v'ne r'p'rtar
 y me q' i b' r'ar co n'aja / por q tomar del lo
 q p'nd'ite y d'pp'no lo d'f'ara i blancos / v'g'z'
 ara y el d'g' y la d'g'na lo d'v'bra f'asta q yo v'g'z'
 mo. q os aya i q' Santa yuar dia / f'ig'ia a 22
 de m'ar'ca i o bella a 5 o 2
 - r'lo q m' dar de .S.
 " X M Y .S.
 XPO FERENS.

[ORIGINAL IN THE CITY HALL, GENOA.]

With this letter Columbus encloses to Oderigo [who, as the ambassador from his native place to Spain, had been his friend and protector] copies of all his letters, patents, grants, titles, privileges, etc., received from the Sovereigns of Spain, authenticated by the Alcalde of Seville. Because of his declining years and increasing doubts of the justice of the King, he places these documents in the hands of a trustee for the benefit of his family, and asks Oderigo to apprise his son, Diego Columbus, of the fact.

These documents lay unknown in the Oderigo family until 1870, when they were discovered and placed in the Archives of Genoa. They are now in the Custodia or monument there, and have been published, together with a memoir of Columbus, by D. Gio Battista Spotorno, Professor of Eloquence in the University of Genoa.

LETTER OF
CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS
TO
THE CATHOLIC KINGS
ON THE
RECOVERY OF THE HOLY CITY OF JERUSALEM.

(The original is in the BOOK OF PROPHECIES in the Colombina Library at Seville.)

MOST CHRISTIAN AND HIGH PRINCES :

The reason why I desire the restitution of the Holy House to the militant church is the following :

MOST HIGH KINGS :

At a very early age I began to navigate the seas, and have ever since continued to do so. The art of navigation itself renders its adepts inclined to investigate the secrets of this world. More than forty years have passed since I have been in this habit. Every place which has been thus far navigated by others has been also navigated by me. I have dealt and talked with learned people, both Laymen and Ecclesiastical, Greek and Latin, Jews and Moors, and Sectarians of many other creeds. To this aspiration of mine I always found the Lord very propitious. He gave me an intelligent spirit; He made me abundantly qualified for the office of a sailor; He caused me to know all that sufficed for my purpose of Astrology, Geometry and Arithmetic; and I received from Him the gift of having ability in my mind and my hands to draw a sphere and mark on it—everything in its proper place—the cities, rivers, mountains, islands and ports.

During the time referred to I have been careful to study what has been written on Cosmography, History, Chronicles, Philosophy and other arts; and it was in this way that our Lord, whose hand in this affair I palpably see, put in my mind the idea that it was practicable to navigate from here to the Indies, and kindled in my heart the desire to accomplish it. Urged by this fire, I came before Your Highnesses.

(OVER)

Carta del Almirante al Rey y a la Reyna

Ypluissimos e unyza los principes

4.

La fazon que yo de la fechoria de la casa sinuayala
sinca yglia militar es la siguiente

sinuay alcos reyes de uny pçuales ad entre eula
unaz nadegado. Allo he currimado fsta oy. la mes
ma dire yndus a quien le profigua. adesea. d'liber
los segeos deste mudo. y apasun d. yl. años. q' yo voy
eneste uso. todolo q' fsta oy se nadege. todo lo q' anda
do trauro y vnder fsta on he teudo coagece fsta. he
reli q' fsta d' fsta. l'ucnos y gnegos l'udios y moios
y coudeyo m'chos de ornas seras. (acte m' d' fsta.
falle d'no. Sc'noz uny fsta. yo de del p' d' fsta
de de ynteligenca. eula varuacia me fsta abdofo
de d' fsta. medio lo q' d' fsta. y. fsta. de gnegos
y aru merica. q' yo gnegos l'udios y moios y l'udios
y p' fsta. y enella las abdofo fsta y moios y l'udios
y p' fsta. todo es sup' d' fsta.

en este tpo he yodisto y p' fsta. e estudio ea vez de rudo
e fsta. co fsta. y fsta. coronas y fsta.
lo fsta. de rudo d' fsta. y me abro nro fsta. el
entre d' fsta. e euano palpable. q' fsta. ha d' fsta.
na. egar de aqu' d' fsta. y me abro l'udios
t. ad para la heze cuao dello. y coueste fsta. y me
a. y. a. / todos d' fsta. q' fsta. de y p' fsta. co
fsta. leuegaron burlando. / todas las c' fsta. de
q' d' fsta. d' fsta. non me d' fsta. de fsta. y l'udios
d' fsta. dellas. eafolo. d' fsta. q' fsta. la fsta. y fsta. y fsta.
quien dubda q' fsta. l'udios no fuele del (e) fsta. fsta. / q' fsta.
como d' fsta. el qual coum' yos de l'udios. m' d' fsta.
fos coufelo. / co fsta. sinca y fsta. (e) fsta. a vos uny
d' fsta. y l'udios. / couquecun y quatro libros de l'
viejo testamento. y quatro heba y gnegos. / con de
yute fsta. he p' fsta. de aquellos b' d' fsta.
dos d' fsta. abidandome q' yo p' fsta. y fsta.
couuo fsta. de momento (me abidan cougra p' fsta.

en lagro / ebidoutismo q' fsta. nro fsta. eneste del
v' fsta. de las yndias por me couf' ar d' fsta. ya couro
eneste rudo. de l'udios. fsta. siete años p' fsta. d' fsta.
casi fsta. de fsta. / el raso q' fsta. p' fsta.



Every one who heard of my undertaking laughed at me and denied its soundness. Neither the knowledge I possessed of the sciences aforementioned nor their own intrinsic authority was of any avail to me. Only in Your Highnesses I found faith and perseverance. Who doubts that this light came to Your Highnesses, as it had come to me, from that very Holy Spirit who so loudly and clearly has given consolation to the world, by means of the wonderful rays of light emanating from the Holy and Sacred Scripture, in 44 books of the Old Testament, and the 4 Gospels and 23 Epistles of the Blessed Apostles. Was not that Spirit the one who urged me to go on constantly, without stopping a moment, and is still urging me, and hastening my steps?

Your Highnesses must remember how little money Your Highnesses could dispose of when the Siege of Granada was undertaken. The determination to undertake all things was left by our Lord to the free will of every one of us. He gives admonition to many; but he denies to none the human power which he may need to engage in the undertaking. Oh! the goodness of the Lord, who wishes the people to do those things which will prove to be to their own advantage! Day and night, and at all moments, men should be thanking Him with the greatest devotion.

I said before that many things contained in the prophecies have not been fulfilled as yet. And I say now that they are great things, and that according to all signs our Lord is hastening its fulfillment. The preaching of the Gospel in so many lands, in such a short time as we have lately seen, proves that to me.

Cardinal Petrus de Ayliaco writes much about the end of the Mahometan sect, and the advent of the Anti-Christ, in a book which he wrote with the title (in latin) "On the Harmony of Astronomic Truth with the Historical Statements." He refutes in that book the opinions of many astronomers on the ten revolutions of Saturn. This he does especially at the end of said book, in the last nine chapters of the same.

Abbé Joachim, of Calabria, said that the one who was to rebuild the house of Mount Sion would come from Spain.

copa le falta q sea en el parte de la guerra ya desistida
o q se nos conuenia q desista q haga la guerra o q
lo sea a cargo // de dia y de noche y en todo momento
le deburan las gentes dar gracias a Dios

y yo dize ayudo q gtaus muchos por temple de las pro-
piedades // y digo q son cosas grandes en el mundo
digo q la y nash es q me seior da preesta orallo // el
predica del euangelio es contra neqas de lo poco q se
a ca me lo digo.

.B. // El abad Iohann / calixto / dize q habia de salua
de españa q se habia de edificar la casa de
monte sión //

.A. // Al cardenal pedro de arlino / muchos cosas de lo de la
gen de mahoma y de los que ymuenos del ante. royo en con-
tando q se oia de concordia astronomia de hitos de
naxacionis historiar // enal q se oia de los de hitos de
astronomos. sobre las diez. Exolunaris de Saturno //
y en especial en el fin de diez y siete. en los munes de q se
oyeron de hitos //

[*Letter of Columbus to the Bank of St. George, April 2, 1502.*]

HIGH, NOBLE LORDS :

Although the body walks about here, the heart is constantly over there. Our Lord has conferred upon me the greatest favor ever granted to any since David. The results of my undertaking already appear, and would shine greatly, were they not concealed by the blindness of the Government. I am going to the Indies again under the auspices of the Trinity, soon to return ; and, since I am mortal, I leave it with my son Diego that you receive every year, forever, one-tenth of the entire revenue, such as it may be, for the purpose of reducing the tax upon corn, wine and other provisions. If that tenth amounts to something, collect it. If not, at least take the will for the deed. I beg you to entertain regard for the son I have recommended to you. Mr. Nicolo de Oderigo knows more about my own affairs than I do myself, and I have sent by him the transcripts of my privileges and letters for safe keeping. I should be glad if you would keep them. My Lords, the King and Queen endeavor to honor more than ever. May the Holy Trinity preserve your noble persons and increase the most magnificent House (of St. George).

Done in SEVILLE, on the second day of April, 1502.

The Chief Admiral of the Ocean, Viceroy
and Governor General of the islands and
continents of Asia, and the Indies, of my
Lords the King and Queen, their Captain
General of the Sea and of their Councils.

S.
S. A. S.
X. M. Y.
XPO FERENS.

[*Letter of Columbus to Nicolo Oderigo, from Seville, December 27, 1504. Original in the City Hall at Genoa.*]

VIRTUOUS SIR :

When I started on my voyage to the places from where I have just come, I spoke at length with you. I understand that you remember well all that then was said.

When returning here, I was in hopes to find some letters from you, or some messenger who would tell me verbally something in your name.

At about the same time of my departure from here, I sent to you by Francisco de Ribarol a book containing copies of several letters, and another in which all the grants and privileges given me were also copied, the whole enclosed in a red-morocco case, with a silver lock. I also sent, with the same man, two letters for the St. George gentlemen, in which I assigned to them the tenth of my revenue in consideration of and compensation for the reduction made on the duties on wheat and the other supplies. To nothing of this I have had any reply. Micer Francisco says that everything arrived safely. If this is the case, the failure of the St. George gentlemen to answer to my letters is an act of discourtesy, for which the treasury is by no means better off. This is the reason why it is generally said that to serve common people is serving no one.*

Another book of my privileges, equal to the one above mentioned, was left by me at Cadiz, with Franco Catanio (who is the bearer of this letter), with instructions to send it to you, in order that you would keep it, together with the other, in some safe place, at your discretion.

At the time of my departure I received a letter from the King and Queen, my Lord and Lady. It is written there. Look at it, and you will find it very good. Nevertheless, Don Diego was not given possession, as it was promised.

While I was in the Indies, I wrote to Their Highnesses, through three or four channels, about my voyage. One of these letters came back to me, and sealed as it was. I enclose it in this and send it to you. In another letter I enclose also a supplement to the above description of my voyage, and I pray you to give both to Micer Juan Luis, to whom I also have written and said that you will be the reader and interpreter of the said letters.

* "*Quien sirve a comun, no sirve a ningun.*"

I am anxious to hear from you, especially about the plan which we agreed to.

I arrived here very sick, and at about the time in which the Queen, my Lady (whom God has with Him), died, and I could not see her.

Up to the present, it is impossible for me to tell you what will be the practical result of all my doings. I suppose that Her Highness has properly provided in her will for everything concerning this matter, and the King, my Lord, always gives good answers.

Franco Catanio will verbally explain to you, at length, all the rest.

May our Lord keep you in His guard.

From SEVILLE, December 27th, 1504.

S.

S. A. S.

X. M. Y.

XPO FERENS.

Great Admiral of the Ocean,

Viceroy and Governor-General of the Indies.

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